

Volunteering in your community

Volunteer hours are NOT a graduation requirement. They are however, required for Florida's Bright Future Scholarships. Visit www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org for more information.

Below are some excellent websites when looking for community service hours. Remember, upon completion of any community service you do, it is your responsibility to obtain a letter verifying your service hours. **It must be on the agencies letterhead, include your full name, the date, hours completed, and a representative's signature.** Bring the letter to the guidance secretary, and we will enter your verified hours which will print out on your official transcripts. We do recommend you make a copy for your own records.

- www.handsonjacksonville.org
- www.volunteermatch.org

BRIGHT FUTURES COMMUNITY SERVICE—WHAT COUNTS, WHAT DOESN'T

1. Service may be volunteered to the school and/or the community.
2. Students must perform volunteer services on their own time, which can include the participant's lunch break.
3. Participation in performances and festivals counts if the following apply:
 - Volunteer service meets an identified community service need, and
 - There is no admission charge accepted for the performance, and
 - Student participation is of voluntary nature, and
 - The performance does not promote the sponsoring organization, and
 - Neither the student organization nor the sponsoring organization receives payment for the performance. If participation meets the above criteria, then partial rehearsal time may be counted. Performing hours may be matched with the same number of rehearsal hours. For example, a chorus member performs 1 hour at a nursing home and is given 2 hours of credit (1 hour for the performance and 1 hour for rehearsal).
 - Band performances in community parades such as 4th of July, Veterans Day, Martin Luther King Day, will count; homecoming parades do not count.
4. Students may not be paid for service rendered.
5. **Volunteer service involving academic requirements for a class will NOT count.**
6. Service rendered, as a prerequisite for employment will not count.
7. Attendance at self-improvement workshops, conferences, or competitions will not count as service.
8. Fundraising for non-profit organizations or charities will count.
9. **Service may NOT be performed for a student's family or for a profit-making organization, except for institutions like hospitals, nursing homes, or the humane society.**
10. Service performed as a result of disciplinary action taken by the school or courts cannot count.
11. Volunteer work for the purpose of promoting a particular religious or political point of view or person cannot count as volunteer hours in this program. **For example, if your church youth group helps with the Special Olympics, those hours would count, but NOT time spent distributing flyers advertising a church revival.**
12. Participation in Varsity or Junior Varsity Athletics and regularly scheduled band and chorus performances does not constitute volunteer service under this program.
13. The above criteria will not cover all circumstances. If a question exists regarding the acceptance of an activity for volunteer service, the student's counselor should approve the service prior to the student's participation. A good guideline would be to ask how the activity addresses the social problem that the student has identified to work on as a part of his/her community service plan.
14. **Some common activities, which DO NOT COUNT, include: acolyte, altar server, lay reader, vacation Bible School, babysitting, working in church nursery, church choir and clerical work for religious, political, or profit making organizations.**

